

(c) In view of persistent losses suffered in all gardens including the gardens in Darjeeling District owned by TTCI Ltd., it has been decided to dispose of these gardens through outright sale. Outstanding liabilities on account of salaries/wages of the workers are proposed to be met by TTCI Ltd. from out of the sale proceeds. Though attempts are being made to complete the sale expeditiously, there has been difficulty in completing the sale process on account of court cases. All possible steps have been taken to expedite the sale. In the meanwhile, the company has been asked to continue production and manufacturing activities to the extent feasible to ensure payment of current dues.

Export of Orchid Flowers

1941. SHRI K. PRADHANI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a good number of orchid flowers cultivated in Sikkim and Darjeeling and exported abroad;

(b) if so, the quantum of orchid flowers exported and the foreign exchange earned therefrom during each of the last three years, country-wise; and

(c) the further steps taken by the Government to boost the export of orchid flowers from the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The foreign exchange earned from export of out flowers including orchid flowers during the period 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96 (April, 95 to Jan, 96) is as follows :

	Value : Rs. in crores		
	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
		(April, 95 to Jan, 96)	
Cut Flowers and Flower buds*	11.92	22.57	35.23

The item "Orchid Flowers" is not separately specified for statistical purposes in the international Trade Classification (Harmonised System) Code and as such it is not possible to furnish the information on export of this item

(Source : DGCI&S, Calcutta)

Country-wise details of export of cut flowers and flower buds are available in the Monthly Statistics of the Foreign Trade of India Published by the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Calcutta, copies of which are available in the Parliament House Library.

*No unit of quantity is assigned to export of cut flowers.

(c) Some of the steps taken by the Government to boost the export of floriculture products including orchid flowers from India, inter-alia, include :-

- (i) Providing financial assistance for development of infrastructure such as refrigerated/insulated vans and setting up of pre-cooling/cold storage units;
- (ii) establishing five walk-in-type cold storages at airports for export consignments awaiting clearance;
- (iii) Streamlining and simplification of plant quarantine procedures for expeditious clearance of cargo;
- (iv) Concessional customs duty on specified goods required for Green Houses;
- (v) Making available the benefits of duty free imports under the export Oriented Units/Export Processing Zones Schemes to units engaged in floriculture and permitting sale of 50% of their production in the Domestic Tariff Area;
- (vi) Implementation of a UNDP assisted Project on Floriculture for enhancing production and exports of cut flowers. Some of the activities to be undertaken in this project include advising entrepreneurs on production of flowers, preparation of crop manuals, undertaking market surveys and providing market information; and
- (vii) Participation in international fairs/exhibitions.

Revision of Wages in Insurance Sector

1942. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH :
SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE :
SHRI MULIAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have revised the wages of the Insurance officials;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the date from which the revised wages have been made effective to the staff of Life Insurance Corporation and General Insurance Corporation;

(c) the details of the revision made in their wage packages, category-wise;

(d) the status of the pension scheme introduced for the officials of the Insurance sector; and

(e) the details of the pending demands of the employees and the reaction of the Government on each of them?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINSTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) :

(a) to (c). Yes, Sir. The category-wise details of the major elements of the wage revision are given in the attached statement;